



**FOR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY OF RIVERS ALLIANCE OF CONNECTICUT  
March 1, 2018**

**AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVASIVE SPECIES STAMP FOR THE OPERATION OF A  
MOTORBOAT ON THE INLAND WATERS OF THE STATE.**

**SUPPORT  
(with recommendations)**

*Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is a statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.*

To: . Christine Cohen and Rep. Mike Demicco, Chairmen,  
And Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Rivers Alliance supports the concept and purpose of this bill. Invasive species in lakes, ponds, and rivers present an exceptionally difficult environmental management problem. Across the state, waters used for boating, swimming, and fishing are impaired by infestations of various aquatic invasives.

Many lakes and ponds are essentially artificial environments and, therefore, especially vulnerable to the spread of invasive organisms, algae blooms, and similar problems. However, our rivers, too, are significantly afflicted by infestations of invasives. I gather that the bill either does cover rivers or is meant to do so. Probably the bill is not intended to cover water unsuitable for motorized boating. *Recommend clarification, if necessary, of the types of waters covered by the bill.*

The funding account referenced in the bill was created in P.A. 18-101 AA ESTABLISHING A "SAVE OUR LAKES" NUMBER PLATE TO COMBAT AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES AND

CYANOBACTERIA BLOOMS. .Section 2 sets up the Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation Account. It is available to DEEP. There are five uses authorized for these funds. The first is for restoration of lakes and ponds (only); the second is for eradication of aquatic invasive species (no location specified);; others are for education and other programs; the general thrust is concern for lakes and ponds, not rivers. *Recommend that the bill clarify that the money raised by the proposed stamp is to be used for a particular range of activities, not all the uses listed for the Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation account*

Rivers Alliance is particularly concerned with the preservation of natural waters and sustainable ecological systems. As members of this committee know, treatments for aquatic invasives are often controversial. Members of a lake community may differ strongly on when and where it is appropriate to use pesticides/herbicides or almost any other means of reducing the prevalence of invasives. Various common herbicides promote a cycle of impairment as dead plants sink to the bottom and rot. Pesticides are also, of course, toxic; they pose various health risks to humans and other creatures. *We recommend that the bill prioritize the use of the least toxic treatments, and that funding also be available for prevention.* Mechanical controls, use of sterile carp, and similar methods should be used whenever possible. Good boat-inspection programs, such as the one at Lake Waramaug, show positive results.

Thank you for addressing this extremely difficult but important problem.

Margaret Miner, Executive Director  
Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, Litchfield CT. 203=788-5161